Characteristics of Alaska's Unemployed

By Jeff Hadland

Each month *Alaska Economic Trends* publishes an estimate of the total number of unemployed persons statewide and by census area. While there is no detailed characteristic information for the total unemployed labor force, characteristic information is available for a major subset of the unemployed-those that receive unemployment insurance payments. Major and detailed occupational categories and place of residence for Alaska claimants residing in the state are discussed below.

Unemployment estimates are determined by an examination of data for the week including the twelfth day of the month. For the benefit week ending November 21, 1987, exactly 9,400 individuals were eligible to receive unemployment insurance payments.

Table 1
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants for Week Ending November 21, 1987
By Region and City

Anchorage-MatSu Region		Interior Region		Northern Region	
Anchorage	3,053	Allakaket	2	Ambler	8
Big Lake	58	Anderson	3	Atqasuk	2
Chugiak/Eklutna	108	Anvik	1	Barrow	15
Eagle River	214	Arctic Village	4	Brevig Mission	1
Elmendorf AFB	19	Beaver	1	Buckland	3
Fort Richardson	21	Central	1	Deering	1
Girdwood	26	Chalkyitsik	1	Elim	1
Houston	9	Chicken	1	Gambell	6
Palmer	300	Circle	2	Kaktovik	1
Skweetna	1	Clear	1	Kiana	6
Sutton	25	College	188	Kivalina	2
Talkeetna Area	20	Curry's Corner	43	Kobuk	2
Trapper Creek	21	Delta Junction	48	Kotzebue	25
Wasilla	513	Denali National Park	26	Koyuk	3
Willow	32	Eagle	2	Noatak	8
		Eielson AFB	22	Nome	41
Gulf Coast Region		Ester	11	Noorvik	8
		Fairbanks	1,035	Nuiqsut	2
Anchor Point	47	Fort Wainwright	25	Point Hope	4
Chitina	1	Fort Yukon/	11	Saint Michael	7
Clam Gulch	8	Galena	7	Savoonga	4
Cooper Landing	6	Grayling	4	Selawik	7
Copper Center	23	Healy	21	Shaktoolik	1
Cordova	44	Holy Cross	6	Shishmaref	14
Gakona	21	Huslia	6	Shungnak	3
Glennallen	17	Kaltag	2	Stebbins	2
Homer	189	Koyukuk	1	Teller	3
Hope	3	Manley Hot Springs	5	Unalakleet	12
Kasilof	40	McGrath	4	Wainwright	3
Kenai	278	Minto	2		
Kodiak	153	Nenana	23	**Southeast Region**	
Moose Pass	3	Nikolai	2		
Nikiski	55	North Pole	250	Angoon	15
Ninilchik	22	Northway	11	Annette	63
Old Harbor	2	Nulato	3	Auke Bay	22
Seldovia	10	Ruby	7	Craig	16
Seward	138	Salcha	19	Douglas	30
Soldotna	284	Stevens Village	2	Excursion Inlet	9
Sterling	50	Summit	21	Gustavus	6
Tatitlek	1	Tanana	7	Haines	43
Tyonek	5	Tok	58	Hoonah	28
Valdez	33	Two Rivers	6	Hydaburg	15
Whittier	1	Univ Of Ak Fairbanks	6	Hyder	2
		Venetie	1	Juneau	333

In November it was estimated that there were 23,694 individuals statewide that were unemployed. This means that only 40% of those Alaskans considered unemployed are currently eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Those ineligible may have exhausted their benefits, may be new entrants to the labor force, or may have a work history in jobs not covered by unemployment insurance.

The percent of unemployed individuals eligible for unemployment insurance benefits during November is about the same as that reported in statistics collected during July of this year, Alaska's traditional seasonal high employment month. The total number of claimants with Alaska addresses has declined by more than seven percent due to exhaustion of benefits, out-migration and long term employment declines. The total number of claimants, both in state and out-of-state, has increased during the same time period.

Unemployment insurance claimants are widely distributed throughout the state. Table 1 shows the residence of claimants by region and community based upon their home address zip code. Anchorage, not surprisingly, has the largest number of unemployment insurance claimants.

Table 1 (continued)
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants for Week Ending November 21, 1987
By Region and City

Southeast Region (continued)	
Kake	15
Ketchikan	217
Klawock	30
Meyers Chuck	1
Outer Ketchikan	8
Pelican	6
Petersburg	102
Sitka	162
Skagway	33
Tenakee Springs	1
Thorne Bay	4
Wrangell	57
Yakutat	18

Southwest Region	
Akiachak	1
Akiak	3
Alakanuk	1
Aleknagik	2
Aniak	5
Bethel	39
Chefornak	2
Chevak	7
Clarks Point	1
Cold Bay	1
Dillingham	23
Dutch Harbor	1
Eek	1
Ekwok	3
Emmonak	7
False Pass	1
Goodnews Bay	3
Hooper Bay	7
Iliamna	2
Kasigluk	4
King Cove	2
King Salmon	4
Kipnuk	16
Kotlik	3
Kwethluk	4
Kwigiggingok	5
Lower Kalskag	2

Southwest Region (continued)	
Manokotak	3
Mekoryuk	4
Mountain Village	6
Naknek	10
Napakiak	1
Nightmute	1
Nondalton	5
Pedro Bay	1
Pilot Station	1
Platinum	1
Port Alsworth	1
Port Heiden	1
Quinhagak	6
Red Devil	1
Russian Mission	3
Saint Marys	7
Sand Point	4
Scammon Bay	3
Sleetmute	1
South Naknek	1
St.George/St.Paul	9
Togiak	2
Tuntutuliak	1
Unalaska	1

The total number of claimants with Alaska addresses has declined by more than seven percent due to exhaustion of benefits, out-migration and long term employment declines.

Table 2
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants for Week Ending November 21, 1987
By Region and Two Digit DOT Occupational Category

Occupation	Region						
	Anch.-MatSu Count	Gulf Coast Count	Interior Count	Northern Count	Southeast Count	Southwest Count	Total
Construction Occs NEC*	684	272	399	66	159	63	1,643
Recordkeeping	357	82	124	10	69	10	652
Food Service	252	121	138	10	112	14	647
Typing	248	45	75	15	72	14	469
Excavate/Paving	213	80	96	9	18	2	418
Food Processing	47	174	12	1	123	20	377
Managers NEC*	227	55	63	4	22	5	376
Materials Handling	146	36	71	4	78	3	338
Mechanics	158	54	63	9	30	6	320
Truck Drivers	145	32	101	5	25	2	310
Administrative Spec.	148	25	72	2	36	6	289
Electrical	150	17	63	2	24	1	257
Information Distribution	128	24	30	2	25	0	209
Misc. Sales	89	14	41	3	44	3	194
Transport. Occs. NEC*	93	25	43	3	22	7	193
Architecture	117	14	41	1	19	0	192
Sales-Commodities NEC*	107	24	21	0	7	1	160
Misc. Professional	68	21	26	2	34	6	157
Painting/Plastering	91	15	38	0	5	1	150
Building Service	70	24	27	4	18	3	146
Welders	52	41	29	3	13	0	138
Education	43	25	35	10	15	9	137
Metal Fab. NEC*	92	13	18	0	6	0	129
Lodging	48	20	31	1	26	2	128
Protective Service	42	12	20	9	15	11	109
Misc. Personal Svc.	42	10	18	2	28	5	105
Structural Work NEC*	32	12	23	4	15	9	95
Misc. Clerical	52	13	17	1	7	2	92
Stock Clerks	47	8	18	1	6	5	85
Mineral Extraction	32	22	7	2	12	0	75
Life Sciences	20	9	20	0	24	2	75
Fishery	11	14	1	1	35	6	68
Forestry	13	6	15	0	28	0	62
Sales-Services	40	7	9	0	5	0	61
Medicine/Health	33	8	14	1	4	1	61
Plant Farming	46	1	3	0	4	0	54
Utility Distribution	10	4	15	4	8	2	43
Mathematics/Science	21	3	7	0	4	0	35
Art	22	2	6	0	3	0	33
Apparel	9	4	5	1	3	1	23
Entertainment/Rec.	13	2	4	1	3	0	23
Graphic Arts	15	2	5	0	1	0	23
Domestic Service	10	3	5	1	4	0	23
Law	17	3	0	0	1	0	21
Printing	15	1	0	0	1	0	17

All unemployment insurance claimants are identified with an occupational code indicating their last or primary occupation. Table 2 shows the number of claimants by 2 digit Dictionary of Occupational Title (DOT) occupational code sorted by the total number of claimants.

Construction related occupations and clerical and professional occupations are the primary sources of claimants for the month of November. When this November data is compared with data for July, claimants from construction occupation have increased in number in response to the

Table 2 (continued)
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants for Week Ending November 21, 1987
By Region and Two Digit DOT Occupational Category

Occupation	Anch.-MatSu Count	Gulf Coast Count	Region Interior Count	Northern Count	Southeast Count	Southwest Count	Total
Writing	8	2	2	1	2	0	15
Sales-Commodities	13	0	1	0	1	0	15
Wood Machining	5	1	0	0	8	0	14
Equip./Instr. Repair	6	3	2	0	2	0	13
Machine Trades	4	0	7	0	1	0	12
Wood Repair	8	0	2	0	1	0	11
Barber, Cosmetology	6	3	2	0	0	0	11
Metal Machining	4	3	0	0	3	0	10
Animal Farming	9	1	0	0	0	0	10
Amusement Service	8	0	1	0	0	0	9
Social Sciences	4	2	2	0	1	0	9
Petroleum Process.	1	8	0	0	0	0	9
Elec. Equip. Repair	3	1	2	0	0	0	6
Textile Repair	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
Museum/Library	3	1	0	0	1	0	5
Misc. Repair	2	2	1	0	0	0	5
Metalworking	1	3	1	0	0	0	5
Painting/Decorating	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Textiles	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Stone Process.	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Misc.	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Misc. Agriculture	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Rubber/Plastic Repair	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Metal Fabrication	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Misc. Process.	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Metal Processing	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ore Refining	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Stone Cutting	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Paperworking	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Bench Work	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4,419	1,431	1,898	195	1,233	224	9,400

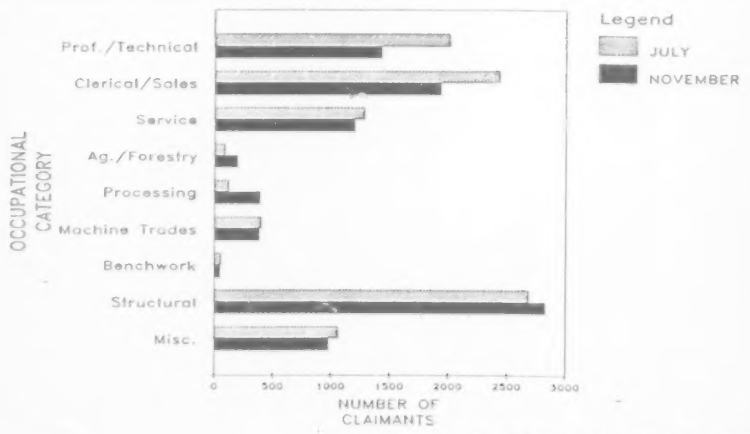
* Not elsewhere classified.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, December 20, 1987.

seasonal downturn in construction activity while the professional and clerical occupations have declined dramatically. The decline in professional and clerical sectors is primarily due to a reduced number of educational claimants.

Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Mat-Su are the largest census areas in terms of unemployment insurance claimant activity. Table 3 shows the number of eligible claimants by census area and broad occupational category. Kenai was the fourth largest source of claims activity in July and has moved up to the third largest source of claims activity for November due to an increase in food processing and construction claimants. Figure 1 illustrates the difference in claims activity by major occupational category between July and November.

Figure 1
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants
By Occupational Category
For Benefit Week Ending 7/25/87 and 11/21/87



Source: Alaska Department of Labor

Table 3
Total Unemployment Insurance Claimants for Week Ending November 21, 1987
By Census Area and One Digit DOT Occupational Code

Census Area	Occupations[1] Prof., Technical	Clerical Sales	Service	Ag.,Fish Forestry	Processing	Machine Trades	Bench Work	Structural	Misc.	Total
Aleutian Islands	2	2	3	0	4	1	0	7	0	19
Anchorage	589	882	376	53	42	133	20	986	360	3,441
Bethel	13	16	16	3	13	3	0	32	5	101
Bristol Bay	1	1	6	0	0	0	0	4	3	15
Dillingham	7	7	7	1	3	0	0	16	3	44
Fairbanks	252	295	193	13	12	65	9	571	191	1,601
Haines	3	12	13	3	0	0	0	7	5	43
Juneau	87	85	64	8	6	15	2	105	22	394
Kenai	142	189	160	11	70	56	7	405	95	1,135
Ketchikan	23	60	40	10	3	4	0	35	47	222
Kodiak	11	14	12	5	74	5	0	26	8	155
Mat-Su	155	199	111	28	10	57	9	328	81	978
Nome	15	19	12	0	1	6	0	33	9	95
North Slope	2	2	4	0	0	1	0	16	2	27
Northwest Arctic	5	11	12	1	0	2	0	35	7	73
POW-Outer Ktkn	12	13	25	9	27	6	0	19	20	131
SE Fairbanks	14	22	21	5	0	2	0	36	20	120
Sitka	21	26	26	8	32	5	1	30	13	162
Skag.)Yak.)Angoon	14	22	20	8	8	4	0	17	14	107
Valdez-Cordova	19	14	25	6	38	2	0	19	18	141
Wade Hampton	7	9	4	2	1	2	0	17	3	45
Wrangell-Peters.	9	18	18	21	47	9	0	27	25	174
Yukon-Koyukuk	26	19	33	1	2	5	0	59	32	177
TOTAL	1,429	1,937	1,201	196	393	383	48	2,830	983	9,400

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, December 20, 1987.

[1] Note: The broad occupational categories identified in Table 3 encompass hundreds of individual occupations. The following information identifies the most frequent occupations included in each of the above categories:

Professional, Technical and Managerial occupations include: Teachers and school personnel, managers, administrative specialists (accounting, personnel, etc), Architects and Engineers.

Clerical and Sales occupations include: Typists and Secretaries, Bookkeepers and Clerks, Telephone Operators, Ticket Agents and Salespersons.

Service occupations include: Food service workers, Building service workers, and Protective service workers.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries occupations include: Loggers, Horticultural specialties, and Fish Harvesters.

Processing occupations include: Seafood processing workers and Wood processing workers.

Machine Trade occupations include: Mechanics, Printers and Wood Machining occupations (sawing, planing, etc.)

Benchwork occupations include: Technical instrument repairers, Electrical equipment repair, Furniture repair.

Structural occupations include: Carpenters, Plumbers, Roofers, Electricians, grading and paving occupations, Welders.

Miscellaneous occupations include: Packaging and materials handling occupations, Truck Drivers, Air and Water transport occupations, mineral extraction occupations (Drillers, crushing occupations, Blasters).

The Gulf Coast and Southeast regions have shown an actual increase in unemployment insurance claimants from July to November 1987. Claimant activity has likely been spurred by a seasonal decline in seafood processing, timber and construction activity.

Alaska's Employment Scene

By Edward Eboch

Alaska's economic problems persist despite several basic industries having their best performance in years. Employment losses this time of year are not unexpected, as firms adjust to the seasonal nature of their industries (Table 1), but all Alaska basic industries, except oil and gas have over-the-year gains in employment.

Manufacturing, both timber and fishing, and mineral mining are up strongly over-the-year. In addition, tourism has improved, including an increase in off-season visitors as evidenced by Anchorage reporting improved convention and visitor bookings. Unfortunately, Alaska's economy is still driven by oil and the cutbacks in oil industry activity and cutbacks in state expenditures continue to reverberate through the economy

Industry Employment

Mining employment declined over-the-month and over-the-year. Oil industry employment typically declines through December and then picks up after the first of the year. Mineral mining employment, while suffering seasonal losses, is up substantially over the year. The gains in mineral mining were not sufficient to offset the losses in the oil industry which dominates employment in the mining industry.

Drilling activity on the North Slope is increasing, mostly workover operations. With the uncertainty about oil prices oil companies continue to approach expanded exploration and development cautiously.

The **construction** industry continues to lose ground, with year-to-year losses of over 16% in employment. Not only has employment declined but also the average hours worked by those still with jobs has dropped, driving down average weekly wages (Table 8). A review of the sample data suggests the drop in hours is widespread within the industry. The state's preliminary capital budget provided little holiday cheer for construction employees, however, other potential projects suggest that 1988 could be as good or better than 1987.

The oil companies have several development projects planned assuming the price of oil does not drop significantly. In addition, military planned construction (including 150 housing units at Fort Wainwright) and other federal projects (including a 150 bed Native medical center), state

Table 1
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Alaska

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	Changes From: 11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	206,000	211,800	214,700	-5,800	-8,700
Mining	8,100	8,300	8,400	-200	-300
Construction	10,400	12,600	12,600	-2,200	-2,200
Manufacturing	11,200	12,200	8,400	-1,000	2,800
Food & Kindred Prod.	5,200	5,800	2,700	-600	2,500
Lumber & Paper Prod.	3,000	3,300	2,600	-300	400
All Other Mfg.	3,000	3,100	3,100	-100	-100
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	16,900	17,700	17,700	-800	-800
Trucking & Whseing.	2,000	2,100	2,100	-100	-100
Water Transportation	900	1,100	1,100	-200	-200
Air Transportation	5,300	5,500	5,300	-200	0
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	8,700	9,000	9,200	-300	-500
Trade	41,000	41,600	43,300	-600	-2,300
Wholesale	7,300	7,400	7,600	-100	-300
Retail	33,700	34,200	35,700	-500	-2,000
Gen. Mer. & Apparel	5,500	5,500	5,600	0	-100
Food Stores	5,800	6,000	6,000	-200	-200
Eating & Drinking Pl.	11,800	12,000	12,800	-200	-1,000
Other Retail Trade	10,600	10,700	11,300	-100	-700
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	11,200	11,400	12,400	-200	-1,200
Services & Misc.	40,500	40,800	42,900	-300	-2,400
Government	66,700	67,200	69,000	-500	-2,300
Federal	18,600	18,600	18,500	0	100
State	19,200	19,600	19,700	-400	-500
Local	28,900	29,000	30,800	-100	-1,900

Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark Date March 1986.

p/ Denotes Preliminary Estimates.

r/ Denotes Revised Estimates

Table 2
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Anchorage

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	101,250	102,800	106,600	-1,550	-5,350
Mining	3,250	3,350	3,200	-100	50
Construction	5,750	6,800	6,750	-1,050	-1,000
Manufacturing	2,150	2,300	2,150	-150	0
Food & Kindred Prod.	400	500	400	-100	0
Other Mfg.	1,750	1,800	1,750	-50	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	8,650	9,150	9,250	-500	-600
Trucking & Whseing.	1,300	1,400	1,350	-100	-50
Water Transportation	250	300	300	-50	-50
Air Transportation	2,800	2,950	3,050	-150	-250
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	4,300	4,500	4,550	-200	-250
Trade	24,650	24,450	25,850	200	-1,200
Wholesale	5,450	5,450	5,800	0	-350
Retail	19,200	19,000	20,050	200	-850
Gen. Merchandise	2,000	1,900	2,050	100	-50
Food Stores	3,100	3,100	3,000	0	100
Eating & Drinking Pl.	7,300	7,300	7,900	0	-600
Other Retail Trade	6,800	6,700	7,100	100	-300
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	7,200	7,300	8,050	-100	-850
Services & Misc.	23,550	23,300	24,300	250	-750
Government	26,050	26,150	27,050	-100	-1,000
Federal	10,500	10,600	10,400	-100	100
State	6,950	6,950	7,300	0	-350
Local	8,600	8,600	9,350	0	-750

Table 3
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Anchorage-MatSu

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	107,350	109,200	113,200	-1,850	-5,850
Mining	3,250	3,400	3,200	-150	50
Construction	5,950	7,150	7,100	-1,200	-1,150
Manufacturing	2,200	2,350	2,250	-150	-50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	9,250	9,800	9,950	-550	-700
Trade	26,150	25,900	27,350	250	-1,200
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	7,750	7,850	8,550	-100	-800
Services & Misc.	24,550	24,400	25,550	150	-1,000
Government	28,250	28,350	29,250	-100	-1,000

projects (Bradley Lake, roads, and facility construction) as well as private projects (construction of a new hotel to replace the Denali National Park Hotel) should keep the construction industry from losing ground through next year.

One problem in assessing the extent of the loss in construction and oil and gas employment is the classification of employers. With the trouble in the oil patch, many firms that concentrated on oil field service activities (including excavating slush pits, grading and building of foundations at oil well locations) but also did construction work are now almost exclusively in heavy or general construction. Because of their previous classification, these firms make it appear that oil and gas employment is better than our estimates indicate and that construction is worse than the estimates suggest.

The **manufacturing** industry offers the greatest potential for Alaska over the short run. The growth in this industry comes at a time that reduced state spending and oil company investments are negatively impacting the state's economy. While this has not prevented the decline in employment statewide it has helped many costal communities.

The timber industry is enjoying one of its best years this decade. Settlement of the controversy over the federal funding for management of the Tongass National Forest and the Tongass timber contracts should help the timber industry in Alaska. Clearly the fishing industry and other interested parties needs can be balanced against the needs of the timber industry to insure success of both these important basic industries.

The improved exchange rate has created interest in opening additional sawmills in Alaska as it is becoming cost effective to have some preliminary timber processing done in Alaska rather than in Japan, Alaska's major market for timber products. Should the state timber sale set for the Susitna Valley north of Anchorage occur as planned we may see the development of a timber industry in Southcentral Alaska.

Gains in fish processing employment has been spectacular. Fish processing employment is showing impressive over-the-year gains, reaching levels in November not seen since the early 1980s when king crab harvests were an important contributor to local economies. While crab harvests have improved, the gains in fish harvesting employment is primarily a result of the increased bottomfish harvests. The benefit of the increased bottomfish catch is the jobs tend to be for a longer duration meaning more local hire.

This segment of the industry should continue to improve as the Fishery Council recently increased to 1.03 million metric tons the quota for U.S. shore based and floating processors for the harvest of bottomfish. Preliminary salmon landing figures show 1987 as the lowest in eight years. It is to early to determine how cutback in state support to hatchery programs will impact the salmon harvests in the future.

The **secondary/support industries** are now the major drag on the economy as over the year losses continue to mount—trade and services down over 5% from last year and finance, insurance, and real estate (TPCU) down 10% as the financial sector consolidates.

To date, eight Alaska financial institution have closed or merged with stronger institutions. First Interstate Bank, the largest and first state chartered bank to fail, was recently merged with National Bank of Alaska. So far the closure/consolidation of Alaska financial institutions have proceeded with little impact on the economy or individuals, with the exception of the loss of employment in that industry. Most failing financial institutions have been merged with stronger institutions so that deposits have been protected and services quickly resumed. Additional consolidation is expected as this industry adjusts to the new economic realities of Alaska's economy.

As a result of the consolidation in the financial institutions, average wages in the industry has decline (Table 8). As financial institutions merge, middle and upper management is consolidated while the rest of the staff tends to be retained. The result is a higher percent of lower paying positions.

Trade and services typically have small month-to-month losses from October to November but this year the month-to-month loss is greater than usual. All segments of the industry have suffered, but the major over-the-year losses have been in eating and drinking places and home furnishing and building material outlets. Over-the-month employment losses in services are primarily in hotels and motels while over-the-year losses are concentrated in business services and nonclassified firms which represent new business that have not been identifies yet as to their major activity. Early indications are for good holiday sales so employment may improve in trade with the release of the December numbers.

Government employment also declined during November. In the past, gains in educational employment from October to November managed to partially offset the losses in noneducational government em-

Table 4
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Fairbanks

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	25,550	26,050	27,100	-500	-1,550
Mining	100	100	100	0	0
Construction	1,550	1,950	1,700	-400	-150
Manufacturing	500	550	600	-50	-100
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2,400	2,500	2,550	-100	-150
Trucking & Whseing.	350	350	350	0	0
Air Transportation	850	900	900	-50	-50
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1,200	1,250	1,300	-50	-100
Trade	5,450	5,350	5,900	100	-450
Wholesale	750	800	950	-50	-200
Retail	4,700	4,550	4,950	150	-250
Gen. Mer. & Apparel	600	500	650	100	-50
Food Stores	750	800	800	-50	-50
Other Retail Trade	3,350	3,250	3,500	100	-150
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	900	950	1,050	-50	-150
Services & Misc.	5,150	5,250	5,650	-100	-500
Government	9,500	9,400	9,550	100	-50
Federal	3,000	2,900	2,900	100	100
State	4,050	4,050	4,000	0	50
Local	2,450	2,450	2,650	0	-200

Table 5
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Interior

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	29,150	30,050	31,100	-900	-1,950
Mining	200	250	250	-50	-50
Construction	1,600	2,050	1,750	-450	-150
Manufacturing	550	550	600	0	-50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2,650	2,850	2,850	-200	-200
Trade	5,750	5,700	6,200	50	-450
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	1,000	1,000	1,100	0	-100
Services & Misc.	5,650	5,800	6,150	-150	-500
Government	11,750	11,850	12,200	-100	-450

ployment. This year over-the-month educational employment was small but losses in noneducation employment was also less than usual as local and state government hired less seasonal employment that usual.

Some of the over-the-year losses in state government may be explained by the Retirement Incentive Program. Over 1,000 State and University of Alaska employees with a like number of local government employees have taken advantage of the Retirement Incentive Program, many at the end of September. It may be several months until qualified candidates fill all the available positions.

While total employment is down 4% and local educational employment is down in excess of 5% over-the-year, public school enrollments are down only 2% according to the Alaska Department of Education. Singles and couples have the easiest time of picking up and leaving as they lose their jobs. Parents with children are more attached to the community and will often make a greater effort to remain. It is also common for people to transfer their children from private schools to public schools during difficult economic times.

Geographic Profile

Anchorage has been the hardest hit during this recession because Anchorage acts as a regional supplier of both employment and goods and services for much of the state. For example, construction is a major export industry for Anchorage. While employment for construction is reported in the area the work occurs, many construction workers lived and spent their income in the Anchorage/MatSu area. In addition, most of the materials are either purchased from Anchorage firms or are transshipped through Anchorage. Therefore cutbacks in construction in rural areas also impact the Anchorage support industries much more than the rural support industries.

The weakness in Anchorages economy is most apparent in the real estate market. Foreclosures persist as Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's inventory of houses continues to mount. The most recent numbers from the Department of Education indicate a loss of approximately 1,000 in school enrollments since the official October count. The population, employment, housing prices, and other declining numbers have a psychological impact. As a result more adjustments are anticipated even though other factors in the economy suggest the worse may be over for Anchorage.

Table 6
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Southeast Alaska

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	27,150	28,400	27,450	-1,250	-300
Construction	950	1,050	1,150	-100	-200
Manufacturing	3,450	4,100	3,000	-650	450
Food & Kindred Prod.	500	850	400	-350	100
Lumber & Paper Prod.	2,750	3,050	2,400	-300	350
All Other Mfg.	200	200	200	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1,950	2,050	1,950	-100	0
Trade	4,250	4,350	4,300	-100	-50
Wholesale	350	350	300	0	50
Retail	3,900	4,000	4,000	-100	-100
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	1,100	1,150	1,200	-50	-100
Mining, Services & Misc.	4,250	4,300	4,350	-50	-100
Government	11,200	11,400	11,500	-200	-300
Federal	2,050	2,100	2,050	-50	0
State	4,900	5,050	5,050	-150	-150
Local	4,250	4,250	4,400	0	-150

Table 7
Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment
By Place of Work
Gulf Coast

	p/ 11/87	r/ 10/87	11/86	Changes From: 10/87	11/86
Nonag. Wage & Salary	18,500	19,100	18,450	-600	50
Mining	650	650	850	0	-200
Construction	850	1,100	1,150	-250	-300
Manufacturing	3,150	3,350	2,050	-200	1,100
Food & Kindred Prod.	2,550	2,750	1,450	-200	1,100
All Other Mfg.	600	600	600	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1,300	1,300	1,300	0	0
Trade	3,400	3,400	3,400	0	0
Wholesale	500	500	500	0	0
Retail	2,900	2,900	2,900	0	0
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	550	600	650	-50	-100
Services & Misc.	3,100	3,150	3,300	-50	-200
Government	5,500	5,550	5,750	-50	-250
Federal	600	600	600	0	0
State	1,500	1,600	1,550	-100	-50
Local	3,400	3,350	3,600	50	-200

Table 8
Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries 1/2

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86
Mining	1,139.31	1,101.70	1,281.52	49.6	47.9	53.8	22.97	23.00	23.82
Construction	848.81	992.48	1,022.13	35.5	40.1	41.0	23.91	24.75	24.93
Manufacturing	494.06	501.65	511.04	40.2	39.5	39.1	12.29	12.70	13.07
Food & Kindred Prod	331.18	296.65	256.40	39.1	35.4	28.3	8.47	8.38	9.06
Lumber & Paper Prod	665.09	739.54	698.41	43.3	46.6	53.6	15.36	15.87	13.03
Trans., Comm. & Util.	552.55	543.53	544.60	36.4	36.7	35.0	15.18	14.81	15.56
Trade	351.62	361.04	384.05	32.8	33.9	33.6	10.72	10.65	11.43
Wholesale	517.82	523.16	540.69	38.3	39.1	37.6	13.52	13.38	14.38
Retail	296.67	307.51	331.34	31.0	32.2	32.2	9.57	9.55	10.29
Finance-Ins. & R.E	386.75	378.48	405.86	35.0	33.2	34.6	11.05	11.40	11.73

Benchmark March 1986
1/ Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics US Department of Labor
2/ excludes eating and drinking establishments

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS SERIES: Averages are based on data for full and part time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

While Fairbanks has suffered hard times, the activities of the military have helped dampen the impact of cuts elsewhere in the Interior area. While the military related civilian employment has not expanded as fast as the increase in military personnel the influx of people and the expectation of possible construction and other military related jobs appears to be keeping people around. School enrollment is up in the Fairbanks Northstar Borough, with an additional 400 since the official numbers have been released. This hidden strength of the economy has helped maintain the housing market, especially as compared to Anchorage and Juneau, during this economic recession.

The **Gulf Coast, Southeast, and Southwest** have all benefited by the strong fishing season. While Southern Southeast had a poor fishing season strong growth in the timber industry eased the pain and added to the growth in many other shore based communities. The Northern Region is still suffering from cutbacks in oil field exploration and development but if the oil companies proceed with their development plans employment growth may be a real possibility.

Juneau has suffered from the cutbacks in state government employment but has managed to replace some of the lost jobs with jobs in mining (Greens Creek Mining Venture) and are building a fish processing facility that will have 70 employees. While these ventures will not replace the loss in state government jobs in either numbers or dollar amounts, they will help diversify the economy and ease Juneau through their problems.

Declining wages and total personal income have accompanied falling em-

Figure 1

Quarterly Index of Personal Income, Employment and Total Income

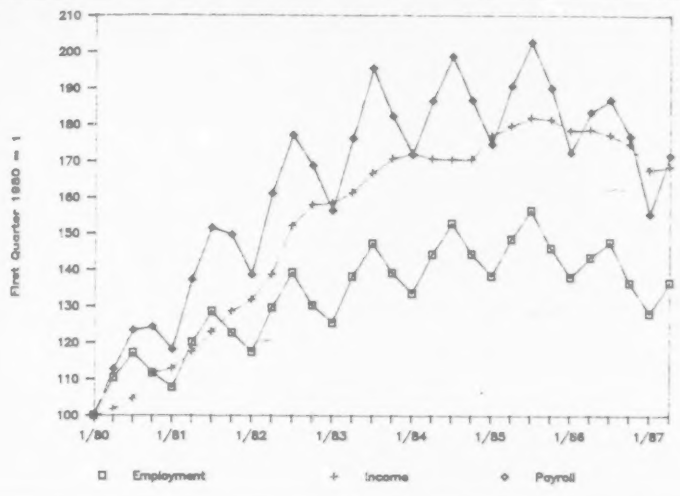
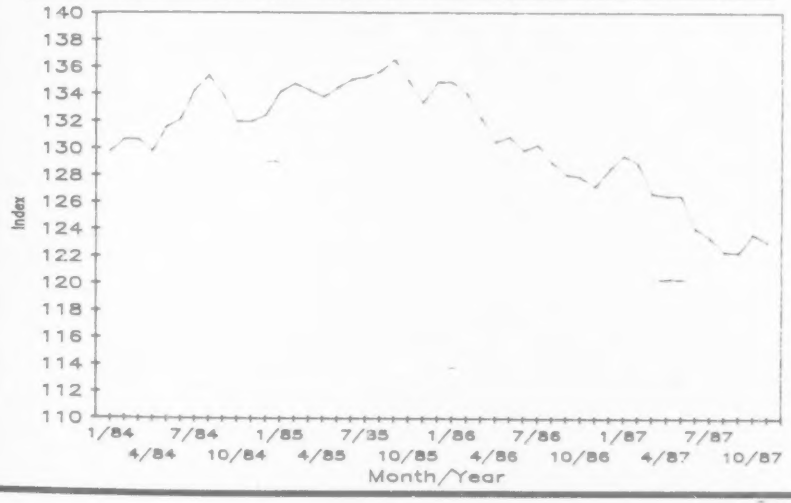


Figure 2

Composite Nonag. Employment Index Seasonally Adjusted – 1984 to Present



ployment (Figure 1). The largest decline in wages was in the construction industry. This decline in income has affected nearly all communities but Anchorage will no doubt feel the greatest impact as the regional center for much of the state.

Conclusion

Even if oil prices decline to $15-$16 a barrel growth in Alaska's other basic industries—fishing, timber, mineral mining, tourism, and federal government, should keep the economy from falling much further. While it is a little early to conclude the end of the recession, the seasonally adjusted data indicate the bottom may have occurred (Figure 2). If oil prices remain at $18 a barrel the turn-around in this recent recession may already be underway.

Anchorage has been the hardest hit by the economic downturn but also has the greatest potential for growth with a recovery. Fairbanks has not felt the full impact of the recession because of the growth in the military and related construction activities. Juneau, as the capital city and heavily dependent on state government for its economic health, is actively developing alternative basic industries. The costal communities have benefited by a strong fishing and tourism season and a recovery in the forest products industry. As a result Alaska's recession has been primarily restricted to its largest communities.

Table 9
Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86	P/ 11/87	R/ 10/87	11/86
Alaska Statewide	246,724	249,222	247,167	23,694	22,885	26,167	9.6	9.2	10.6	223,030	226,337	221,000
Anch.-MatSu Region	131,429	131,734	133,444	11,394	10,920	12,152	8.7	8.3	9.1	120,035	120,814	121,292
Anchorage Borough	116,655	116,867	118,001	8,619	8,411	9,611	7.4	7.2	8.1	108,036	108,456	108,390
MatSu Borough	14,774	14,867	15,443	2,775	2,509	2,541	18.8	16.9	16.5	11,999	12,358	12,902
Gulf Coast Region	26,052	26,517	25,725	3,089	3,197	4,065	11.9	12.1	15.8	22,963	23,320	21,660
Kenai Peninsula Bor	16,157	16,466	15,994	2,456	2,552	3,070	15.2	15.5	19.2	13,701	13,914	12,924
Kodiak Island Bor	6,003	6,093	5,826	281	282	428	4.7	4.6	7.3	5,722	5,811	5,398
Valdez-Cordova	3,892	3,958	3,905	352	363	567	9.0	9.2	14.5	3,540	3,595	3,338
Interior Region	37,422	38,015	38,207	4,782	4,600	5,166	12.8	12.1	13.5	32,640	33,415	33,041
Fairbanks North Star Br	32,305	32,878	33,004	3,964	3,864	4,315	12.3	11.8	13.1	28,341	29,014	28,689
Southeast Fairbanks	2,229	2,235	2,278	326	287	352	14.6	12.8	15.5	1,903	1,948	1,926
Yukon-Koyukuk	2,888	2,902	2,925	492	449	499	17.0	15.5	17.1	2,396	2,453	2,426
Northern Region	7,928	7,898	7,887	755	559	784	9.5	7.1	9.9	7,173	7,339	7,103
Nome	3,062	3,024	3,027	337	237	329	11.0	7.8	10.9	2,725	2,787	2,698
North Slope Borough	2,778	2,806	2,765	139	105	151	5.0	3.7	5.5	2,639	2,701	2,614
Northwest Arctic Bor	2,088	2,068	2,095	279	217	304	13.4	10.5	14.5	1,809	1,851	1,791
Southeast Region	32,481	33,246	31,781	2,895	2,648	3,254	8.9	8.0	10.2	29,586	30,598	28,527
Haines Borough	911	910	880	112	84	110	12.3	9.2	12.5	799	826	770
Juneau Borough	14,039	14,422	13,795	928	860	1,152	6.6	6.0	8.4	13,111	13,562	12,643
Ketchikan Gateway Br	6,499	6,703	6,450	539	540	704	8.3	8.1	10.9	5,960	6,163	5,746
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ktch	2,355	2,411	2,299	336	323	352	14.3	13.4	15.3	2,019	2,088	1,947
Sitka Borough	3,904	3,957	3,705	379	312	306	9.7	7.9	8.3	3,525	3,645	3,399
Skagway-Yakutat-Ang	1,542	1,542	1,460	276	233	240	17.9	15.1	16.4	1,266	1,309	1,220
Wrangell-Petersburg	3,231	3,301	3,192	325	296	390	10.1	9.0	12.2	2,906	3,005	2,802
Southwest Region	11,412	11,812	10,123	779	961	746	6.8	8.1	7.4	10,633	10,851	9,377
Aleutian Islands	2,929	3,011	2,610	89	113	106	3.0	3.8	4.1	2,840	2,898	2,504
Bethel	4,564	4,744	4,075	344	438	354	7.5	9.2	8.7	4,220	4,306	3,721
Bristol Bay Borough	456	477	397	51	63	40	11.2	13.2	10.1	405	414	357
Dillingham	2,027	2,087	1,793	147	168	135	7.3	8.0	7.5	1,880	1,919	1,658
Wade Hampton	1,436	1,493	1,248	148	179	111	10.3	12.0	8.9	1,288	1,314	1,137

P/ Preliminary R/ Revised 1986 Benchmark

Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor force data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey (CPS) in formulas used to allocate federal funds. Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor, because Alaska's CPS sample size is inadequate to accurately indicate monthly changes in level. The sampling errors are random in nature; meaning that the unemployment rates, in any given month, are as likely to be high as frequently as they are low. The official definitions of unemployment, currently in place, exclude anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four week period up to and including the week that includes the twelfth of each month. Most economists feel that Alaska's rural localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.

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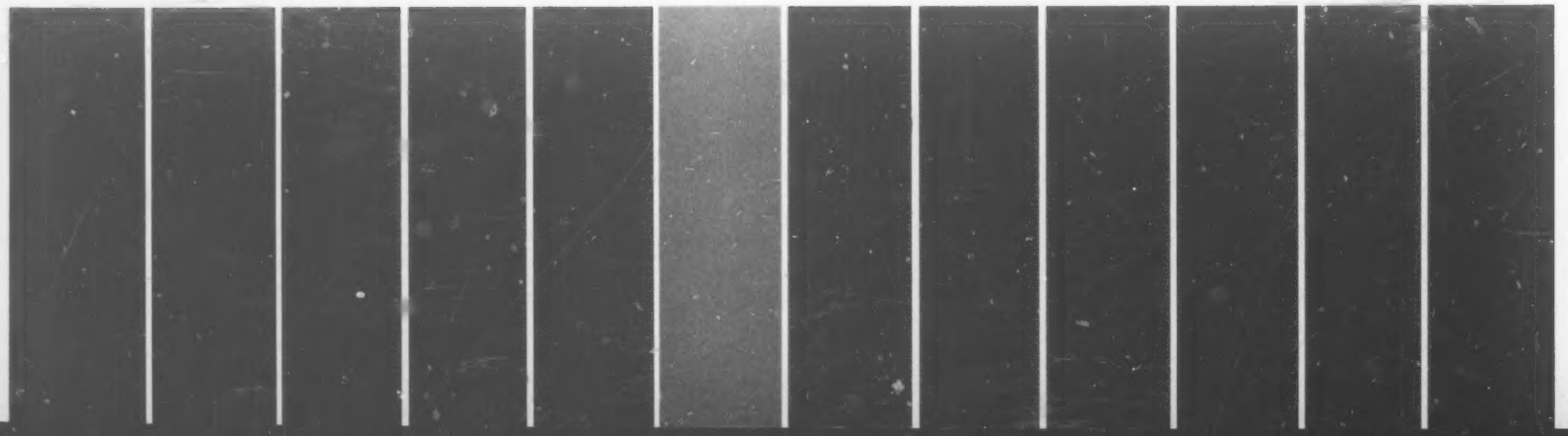

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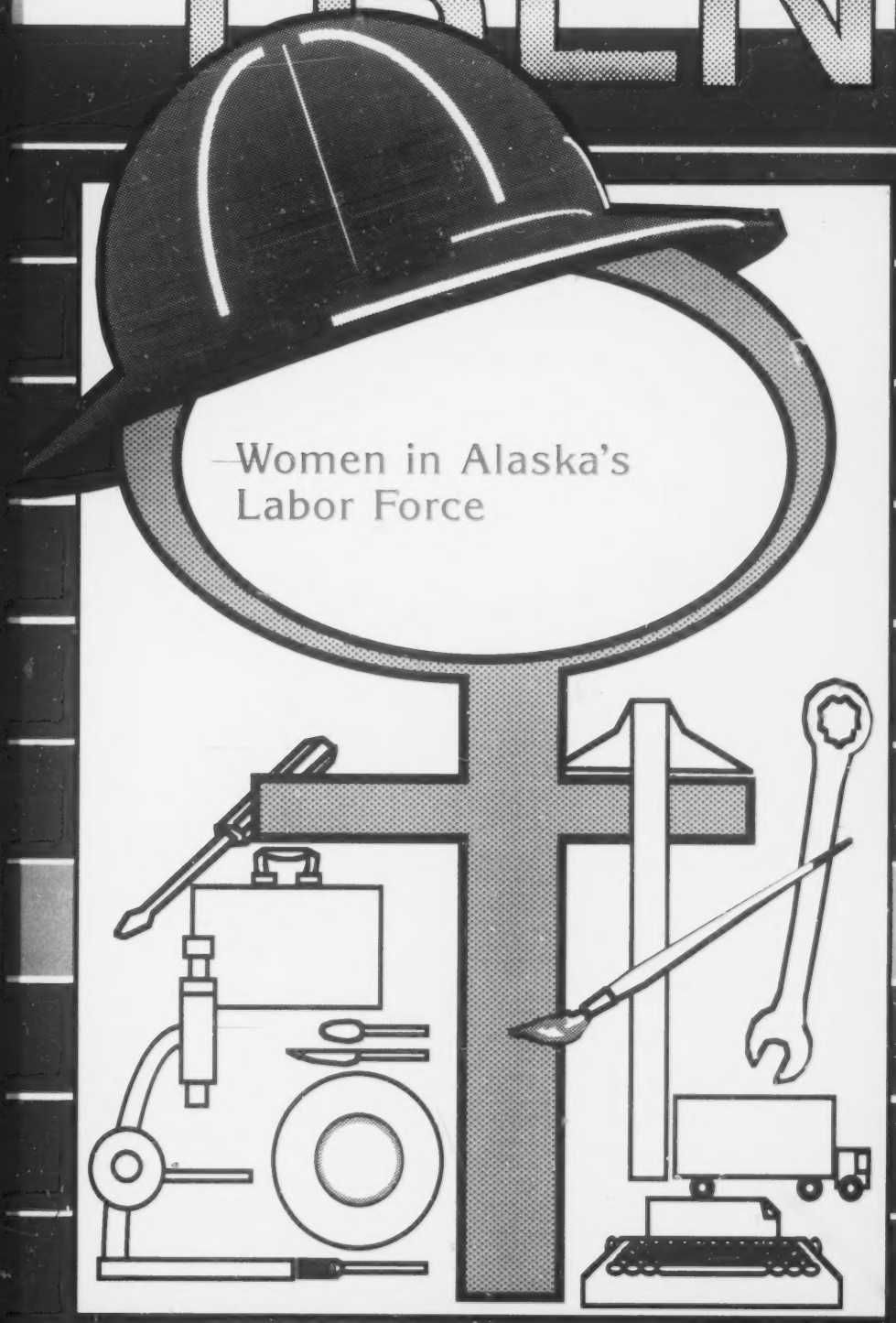

Women in Alaska's Labor Force

February 1988

MatSu's Economic Scene

The Kenai Peninsula Borough: An Economic Assessment

Alaska's Employment Scene

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

Alaska Economic Trends

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February 1988
Volume 8
Issue 2

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Alaska Economic Trends is a monthly publication dealing with economic information analysis and issues of Alaska. Opinions expressed by guest authors may not be consistent with those of the Alaska Department of Labor.

We welcome contributions on current economic issues from our readers. For a copy of our editorial policy contact Dr. Edward W. Eboch, Editor, Alaska Economic Trends, Alaska Department of Labor, P.O. Box 25501, Juneau, Alaska 99802-5501.

The following notes pertain to Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment Tables:

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark date: March 1986.

P/ Denotes preliminary estimates.
R/ Denotes revised estimates.

Women in Alaska's Labor Force

By John Boucher

While monthly estimates of employment and unemployment are a regular feature of *Alaska Economic Trends*, detailed characteristic data about cross-sections of Alaska's labor force are not available from the monthly estimates. For example the monthly estimates don't tell us anything about how many females were unemployed during the month. Women are not the only group in the Alaskan labor force about which there is a dearth of information. The same is true for other special worker groups such as the elderly, veterans, Alaskan Natives, and youth. In this article, we will examine the sources of labor force data that are available on women in Alaska's labor force.

1980 Census

The most comprehensive data source on women in Alaska's labor force is from the 1980 Census of Population. Unfortunately, so much has changed in Alaska during the past seven years that most of the information available from the Census is outdated. Alaska's economy has been far from static in the seven years since 1980. Alaska first went through a tremendous growth in employment opportunities in the early 80s, then a recession during the past two years which has rocked even traditionally stable industries like government. This doesn't consider the continuing rapid evolution of women's role in todays labor force. Because of these factors as well as the readily availability of 1980 Census data, this article will concentrate on more recent data sources than the 1980 Census of Population. For a rundown of female labor force data available from the 1980 Census, consult the Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Demographics Unit.

Current Population Survey

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly nationwide survey of 60,000 households conducted by the Bureau of Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data collected are based on labor force status as of the 12th of the month. In Alaska, approximately 1,170 households representing nine of Alaska's 23 census areas are assigned to be surveyed each month.[1] The data published in the following tables are summary data from the 1986 Current Population Survey.

Since the data are survey based, none of the unemployment rates should be considered exact. All of the measurements have associated error rates. A rule of thumb when comparing these statistics is that error ranges get larger as the group being measured gets smaller. For example, the CPS unemployment rate for all Alaskan females in 1986 was 9.1% and the range is from 7.9% to 10.4% unemployed. However, for the subset of Alaskan females aged 16 to 19 the unemployment rate was 22.6%, but the range from about 17% to 28%.

Table 1 compares Alaska with the other 49 states and the District of Columbia in terms of overall female participation in the labor force and the unemployment rate for females. The comparison revealed mixed messages about the labor market for women in Alaska. On one hand the unemployment rate for females in Alaska was among the ten highest in the nation, at 9.1%. By contrast the labor force participation rate for females in Alaska was the third highest in the nation. This indicated that Alaskan women are active in the labor force to a greater extent than almost anywhere else in the nation.

The labor force participation rate for females in Alaska was the third highest in the nation.

[1] In any given month about 70% of all of the households assigned are actually surveyed in the CPS. Of the nine census areas which are surveyed, five of those represent the data for their own area while the other four represent the data for their own area as well as data for the 14 census areas which are not surveyed.

Table 1
Female Unemployment Ranked by State—1986 Annual Averages
With Participation Rate and Rank

Rank		Female Population (thous)	Female Labor Force (thous)	Female Employed (thous)	Female Unemployed (thous)	Female Unemployment Rate	Female Participation Rate	Part. Rate Rank
1	Louisiana	1,725	875	755	120	13.7%	50.7%	47
2	Mississippi	1,004	517	449	68	13.1	51.5	45
3	Alabama	1,618	862	771	91	10.6	53.3	42
4	West Virginia	775	307	277	30	9.9	39.6	51
5	Arkansas	938	480	434	46	9.6	51.2	46
6	Kentucky	1,457	715	648	67	9.4	49.1	50
7	ALASKA	176	114	104	10	9.1	64.9	2
7	Tennessee	1,945	1,057	961	96	9.1	54.4	38
9	Michigan	3,584	1,914	1,741	173	9.0	53.4	41
10	Texas	6,172	3,515	3,209	307	8.7	57.0	28
10	Washington	1,693	962	879	83	8.7	56.8	30
12	Wyoming	179	107	98	9	8.6	59.6	12
13	Oregon	1,051	611	559	52	8.5	58.1	21
13	New Mexico	533	281	258	24	8.5	52.8	43
15	Illinois	4,564	2,498	2,297	201	8.0	54.7	37
16	South Carolina	1,320	738	681	57	7.7	55.9	34
17	Oklahoma	1,278	721	666	54	7.6	56.4	32
17	Idaho	358	202	187	15	7.6	56.6	31
17	District of Columbia	264	165	153	13	7.6	62.7	5
17	Indiana	2,160	1,243	1,149	94	7.6	57.6	24
17	Georgia	2,404	1,402	1,296	106	7.6	58.3	19
22	Montana	308	178	165	13	7.3	57.8	24
22	Ohio	4,244	2,296	2,127	169	7.3	54.1	40
24	Iowa	1,108	631	586	45	7.2	57.0	28
25	Arizona	1,272	700	650	50	7.1	55.0	35
26	Colorado	1,273	774	721	53	6.9	60.8	7
27	Utah	545	321	299	22	6.8	58.9	16
28	California	10,328	5,801	5,413	388	6.7	56.2	33
28	Wisconsin	1,833	1,049	979	70	6.7	57.2	27
30	Pennsylvania	4,899	2,479	2,324	156	6.3	50.6	48
31	North Dakota	247	145	136	9	6.2	58.9	16
32	Missouri	1,980	1,135	1,066	69	6.1	57.3	26
33	North Carolina	2,531	1,471	1,382	89	6.0	58.1	21
33	Florida	4,875	2,546	2,395	152	6.0	52.2	44
35	Kansas	944	549	517	32	5.9	58.2	20
36	New York	7,359	3,722	3,508	214	5.8	50.6	48
36	Nevada	386	251	237	15	5.8	65.1	1
38	Virginia	2,254	1,306	1,232	74	5.7	57.9	23
39	Maine	463	251	237	14	5.6	54.2	39
40	New Jersey	3,112	1,710	1,616	95	5.5	54.9	36
41	Minnesota	1,610	989	936	53	5.3	61.4	6
41	Maryland	1,801	1,095	1,037	58	5.3	60.8	7
43	Vermont	212	134	127	7	5.2	63.2	3
44	Nebraska	607	367	348	19	5.1	60.5	10
45	South Dakota	259	154	147	8	4.9	59.5	13
46	Hawaii	387	228	217	11	4.8	59.0	15
47	Delaware	254	150	144	6	4.3	59.1	14
48	Rhode Island	412	247	237	10	4.2	59.9	11
49	Connecticut	1,307	794	762	32	4.1	60.8	7
50	Massachusetts	2,423	1,419	1,366	53	3.7	58.6	18
51	New Hampshire	400	253	244	8	3.3	63.2	3

Source: Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1986.

Given the high unemployment rate for the overall population in 1986, (10.9%), Alaska's relatively high national ranking for female unemployment is not too surprising. What is most remarkable about the 1986 unemployment rate for females in Alaska is that the female unemployment rate was significantly below both the statewide average and the male unemployment rate. (see Table 2) West Virginia was the only other state in the nation where females had a much lower unemployment rate than males. Alaska's relatively low female unemployment rate in 1986 seems to be unique though, because West Virginia has the lowest participation rate for females in the nation (39.6%). In the other states with high female unemployment, women tend to participate in the labor force to a

much lesser degree than Alaskan women.

Why would female unemployment be much lower than male unemployment in Alaska during 1986? A tremendous amount of construction and oil industry unemployment occurred in 1986. These two industries are dominated by occupations in which the vast majority of the job holders are males. The comparatively higher unemployment rate for males is one effect of the downturn in the oil and construction industries.

However, this is not a new phenomenon for Alaska, in each of the years since 1980 female unemployment has tended to be lower than male unemployment (Table 3). This is due to the clustering of females in occupations which tend to be less seasonal in nature than some male occupational clusters, particularly those related to construction.

The reasons behind Alaska's high participation rate for females in the labor force are more difficult to discern. The major factor is that Alaska has a much younger population. Participation rates for females are much higher among the age group from 20-54 than in the 55+ age group. In Alaska 79% of the total female population is in this age group while nationally 63% of the female population falls into that age group (Table 4).

It is interesting to note that as a group the females in Alaska in their prime working years (20-54) have a participation rate that is only slightly higher than the national average. That would dispel the notion that the higher participation rate statewide is caused by females having to work as second income earners in Alaska because of the high cost of living.

Even though the participation rate for females aged 20-54 in Alaska is similar to the national average, different work force patterns are evident from the breakdown of the female labor force by age. It appears that in Alaska women are more likely to stay active in the labor force into their 40s and 50s than they are in the rest of the nation. Why Alaskan women stay active in the labor force longer in Alaska is a matter of speculation, but one reason could be that females are working longer in anticipation of relocation elsewhere once they reach retirement age. This conclusion might be reached from the fact that a significant number of Alaskans appear to prefer to spend their retirement years out of the state.

Table 2
Female Unemployment Ranked by State—1986
With Total and Male Unemployment Rates

		Female Unemployment Rate	Total Unemployment Rate	Male Unemployment Rate
1	Louisiana	13.7%	13.1%	12.7%
2	Mississippi	13.1	11.7	10.6
3	Alabama	10.6	9.8	9.2
4	West Virginia	9.9	11.8	13.2
5	Arkansas	9.6	8.7	8.1
6	Kentucky	9.4	9.3	9.1
7	**ALASKA**	9.1	10.9	12.1
7	Tennessee	9.1	8.0	7.2
9	Michigan	9.0	8.8	8.6
10	Texas	8.7	8.9	9.0
10	Washington	8.7	8.2	7.8
12	Wyoming	8.6	9.0	9.2
13	Oregon	8.5	8.5	8.4
13	New Mexico	8.5	9.2	9.7
15	Illinois	8.0	8.1	8.2
16	South Carolina	7.7	6.2	5.0
17	Oklahoma	7.6	8.2	8.8
17	Idaho	7.6	8.7	9.6
17	District of Columbia	7.6	7.7	7.8
17	Indiana	7.6	6.7	6.0
17	Georgia	7.6	5.9	4.5
22	Montana	7.3	8.1	8.7
22	Ohio	7.3	8.1	8.7
24	Iowa	7.2	7.0	6.9
25	Arizona	7.1	6.9	6.8
26	Colorado	6.9	7.4	7.9
27	Utah	6.8	6.0	5.4
28	California	6.7	6.7	6.7
28	Wisconsin	6.7	7.0	7.4
30	Pennsylvania	6.3	6.8	7.3
31	North Dakota	6.2	6.3	6.4
32	Missouri	6.1	6.1	6.1
33	North Carolina	6.0	5.3	4.7
33	Florida	6.0	5.7	5.5
35	Kansas	5.9	5.4	5.1
36	New York	5.8	6.3	6.7
36	Nevada	5.8	6.0	6.2
38	Virginia	5.7	5.0	4.5
39	Maine	5.6	5.3	5.1
40	New Jersey	5.5	5.0	4.6
41	Minnesota	5.3	5.3	5.3
41	Maryland	5.3	4.5	3.8
43	Vermont	5.2	4.7	4.2
44	Nebraska	5.1	5.0	5.0
45	South Dakota	4.9	4.7	4.6
46	Hawaii	4.8	4.8	4.9
47	Delaware	4.3	4.3	4.4
48	Rhode Island	4.2	4.0	3.9
49	Connecticut	4.1	3.8	3.5
50	Massachusetts	3.7	3.8	3.9
51	New Hampshire	3.3	2.8	2.3

Source: Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1986

Unemployment Insurance Claims Data

Another source of data available which can shed light on the female labor force situation is unemployment claims data. Tables 5-11 are developed from the Claimant Characteristics tape, a special compilation of information on all claimants who received unemployment compensation in 1986. Occupations are listed according to classifications in the Dictionary of Occupational titles or DOT codes. Ethnic information is based on information voluntarily submitted at the initial time of filing. Annual average income refers to the claimants income in the base benefit period, which is defined as the first four quarters of the five most recent quarters.

From Tables 5-11 we can develop a profile which can characterize the typical female who claimed unemployment in Alaska in 1986. If a generic description were available, the typical female claiming unemployment in Alaska would be charac-

Table 3
Female, Male & Total Unemployment Rates
For Alaska 1980-1986

—	Female Unemployment Rate	Total Unemployment Rate	Male Unemployment Rate
1980[2]	7.8%	9.5%	10.7%
1981	7.7	9.3	10.4
1982	8.5	9.9	11.0
1983	8.3	10.3	11.4
1984	8.7	10.0	11.1
1985	8.0	9.7	10.9
1986	9.1	10.9	12.1

[2] 1980 Census

Source: Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986.

Table 4
Employment status of Women in 1986 by Age
Alaska & The U.S.

ALASKA	Female Population (thous)	Percent of Total Population	Female Participation Rate	Female Labor Force (thous)	Female Employed (thous)	Female Unemployed (thous)	Female Unemployment Rate
Age 16+	176	100.0%	64.9%	114	104	10	9.1%
Age 16-19	14	8.0	45.3	6	5	1	22.6
Age 20+	162	92.0	66.6	108	99	9	8.4
Age 20-24	22	12.5	68.6	15	13	2	12.5
Age 25-34	54	30.7	63.2	37	33	3	9.3
Age 35-44	42	23.9	78.1	33	31	2	7.4
Age 45-54	20	11.4	75.3	15	14	1	6.6
Age 20-54	138	78.4	72.5	100	91	8	
Age 55-64	13	7.4	48.1	6	6	*	4.0
Age 65+	10	5.7	12.4	1	1	*	1.2

UNITED STATES	Female Population (thous)	Percent of Total Population	Female Participation Rate	Female Labor Force (thous)	Female Employed (thous)	Female Unemployed (thous)	Female Unemployment Rate
Age 16+	94,789	100.0%	55.3%	52,413	48,706	3,707	7.1%
Age 16-19	7,221	7.6	53.0	3,824	3,149	675	17.6
Age 20+	87,568	92.4	5.5	48,590	45,555	3,032	6.2
Age 20-24	10,072	10.6	72.4	7,293	6,540	752	10.3
Age 25-34	21,233	22.4	71.6	15,208	14,109	1,099	7.2
Age 35-44	16,692	17.6	73.1	12,204	11,595	609	5.0
Age 45-54	11,746	12.4	65.9	7,746	7,395	350	4.5
Age 20-54	59,743	63.0	71.1	42,451	39,639	2,810	6.6
Age 55-64	11,675	12.3	42.3	4,940	4,751	189	3.8
Age 65+	16,150	17.0	7.4	1,199	1,165	33	2.8

Source: Current Population Survey, unpublished data.

terized like this: She would be white, between the ages of 25 and 34, have no dependents and her annual average income would be below $10,000. Her last place of work would have been in a service or retail establishment where she worked in a clerical capacity.

In addition to defining who a typical unemployed female in Alaska might be, Tables 5-11 can help identify where pockets of unemployed females are in Alaska. By inference then one might assume that where there are pockets of unemployment, those are the areas or characteristics which best describe the employed female population as well.

For example in Table 5, UI Claims by Industry, it is apparent that services and trade are industries where females are concentrated. More than 55% of all unemployment claims by females in 1986 were in these two industries. After these two industries, public administration (government) and finance-insurance and real estate combined to make up an additional 20% of the unemployed females in Alaska. At the other end of the spectrum less than 2% of the unemployed females last worked in the mining industry.

The typical female claiming unemployment in Alaska would be characterized as white, between the ages of 25 and 34, have no dependents and her annual average income would be below $10,000.

Table 5
UI Claimants by Industry

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
Ag-For-Fish	88	372	23.7%	0.4%
Mining	401	3,855	10.4	1.7
Oil & Gas	359	3,384	10.6	1.5
Other Mining	42	471	8.9	0.2
Construction	1,166	17,112	6.8	4.8
Manufacturing	1,581	6,312	25.0	6.5
Food & Kindred Prod.	1,091	3,483	31.3	4.5
Lumber & Wood Prod.	120	1,287	9.3	0.5
Paper Prod.	71	501	14.2	0.3
Other Manufacturing	299	1,041	28.7	1.2
Trans. Comm., & Utils.	1,726	5,883	29.3	7.1
Trade	5,926	12,680	46.7	24.5
Wholesale Trade	683	2,226	30.7	2.8
Retail Trade	5,243	10,454	50.2	21.7
F.I.R.E.	1,989	2,920	68.1	8.2
Services	7,683	14,364	53.5	31.8
Public Administration	3,372	8,275	40.7	14.0
Unclassified	216	622	34.7	0.9
Totals	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986, Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Table 6
UI Claimants By Number of Dependents

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
0 Dependents	14,764	45,999	32.1%	61.1%
1 Dependent	4,551	11,046	41.2	18.8
2 Dependents	3,259	9,574	34.0	13.5
3 Dependents	1,560	5,706	27.3	6.5
4+ Dependents	14	70	20.0	0.1
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986, Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Table 7
Claimants By Ethnicity

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
White	18,727	57,851	32.4%	77.6%
Alaskan Native/American Indian	3,092	8,763	35.3	12.8
Black	975	2,197	44.4	4.0
Hispanic	422	1,229	34.3	1.7
Asian & Pacific Islanders	733	1,795	40.8	3.0
No Information	199	560	35.5	0.8
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986, Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Table 8
UI Claimants By Age

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
Less than 21	1,725	4,122	41.8%	7.1%
21-24	3,678	9,692	37.9	15.2
25-34	9,947	29,425	33.8	41.2
35-44	5,299	16,905	31.3	21.9
45-54	2,268	7,957	28.5	9.4
55-64	924	3,403	27.2	3.8
65 and over	307	891	34.5	1.3
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986. Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Table 9
UI Claimants By Income

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
0-999	2	5	40.0%	0.0%
1,000-9,999	9,720	20,956	46.4	40.3
10,000-19,999	8,804	22,558	39.0	36.5
20,000-29,999	3,867	13,418	28.8	16.0
30,000-39,999	1,192	7,311	16.3	4.9
40,000-49,999	379	3,978	9.5	1.6
50,000-59,999	126	2,140	5.9	0.5
60,000-69,999	39	1,163	3.4	0.2
70,000-79,999	16	554	2.9	0.1
80,000-89,999	1	205	0.5	0.0
90,000 and over	2	107	1.9	0.0
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986. Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Table 10
UI Claimants by Occupation

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry	185	1,392	13.3%	0.8%
Benchwork	105	381	27.6	0.4
Clerical & Sales	11,536	14,563	79.2	47.8
Machine Trades	113	3,504	3.2	0.5
Processing	814	2,296	35.5	3.4
Professional, Technical & Managerial	4,963	11,205	44.3	20.6
Services	4,891	8,341	58.6	20.3
Structural Work	636	22,011	2.9	2.6
Misc. & Unknown	905	8,702	10.4	3.7
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986. Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

Conclusions

While data is somewhat sparse on the current status of women in Alaska's labor force, the available data does point to several characteristics of females in the current labor market. Although female unemployment in the state is high, females are less likely to become unemployed than males in Alaska. This is predominantly due to the clustering of females in occupations and industries which tend not to experience regular periods of unemployment such as construction.

While Alaskan females may have opportunities not as available in other parts of the country, an equal position for females in Alaska's labor force has yet to be achieved.

Alaskan women participate in the labor force to a much greater degree than almost anywhere else in the nation, however that is a function of the younger average age of Alaskan women which translates into more Alaskan females in their prime working years. Occupational clustering in services, clerical and sales occupations, which tend to be lower paying, is apparent from unemployment insurance claims data. In short, while Alaskan females may have opportunities not as available in other parts of the country, an equal position for females in Alaska's labor force has yet to be achieved.

Table 11
UI Claimants By Census Area

	Female	Total	Female % of Total	% of Female
Aleutian Islands	89	192	46.4%	0.4%
Anchorage Borough	6,628	19,857	33.4	27.4
Bethel	262	868	30.2	1.1
Bristol Bay Borough	28	74	37.8	0.1
Dillingham	119	339	35.1	0.5
Fairbanks North Star Borough	2,668	8,634	30.9	11.0
Haines Borough	84	262	32.1	0.3
Juneau Borough	976	2,605	37.5	4.0
Kenai Peninsula Borough	1,795	5,711	31.4	7.4
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	583	1,605	36.3	2.4
Kodiak Island Borough	376	1,039	36.2	1.6
MatSu Borough	1,543	5,270	29.3	6.4
Nome	193	763	25.3	0.8
North Slope Borough	102	366	27.9	0.4
Northwest Arctic Borough	180	582	30.9	0.7
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	298	855	34.9	1.2
Sitka Borough	336	979	34.3	1.4
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon	210	621	33.8	0.9
Southeast Fairbanks	192	633	30.3	0.8
Valdez-Cordova	311	900	34.6	1.3
Wade Hampton	102	392	26.0	0.4
Wrangell-Petersburg	257	901	28.5	1.1
Yukon-Koyukuk	316	1,027	30.8	1.3
Out of State	6,500	17,920	36.3	26.9
Total	24,148	72,395	33.4	100.0

Source: Claimant Characteristics Tape, 1986. Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis, Reports Unit.

MatSu's Economic Scene

By Greg Huff

Descriptions of MatSu's economy in 1987 were often accompanied by bad news of foreclosures, bankruptcies, smaller budgets, bank closings, and job losses. As 1988 arrived, economy watchers were beginning to formulate a more optimistic outlook for MatSu's economy. The new optimism is founded in the belief that MatSu's economy is in a state of stabilization and that the economy will soon turn around. The big question is whether this new optimism is warranted given current economic data, and if so what does it mean for the MatSu economy in the near future?

This article examines MatSu's job statistics and other economic indicators to see if MatSu's economy is in a stage of stabilization; where loss of businesses, homes, and jobs will subside and then be followed by a period of moderate growth. But before we gaze into the future a review of recent historical data is needed to put the outlook into perspective.

Review 1980-1985

MatSu's economy began the 1980s with a surge of population growth that was ignited by in-migration. Most of the population gains came from the movement of Anchorage residents to the valley and in-migration from the lower 48. In fact, over four-fifths of the population gain was due to newly arrived residents. According to Research and Analysis statistics the total number of new residents to the borough from the lower 48 was second only to Anchorage and the in-migration rate from locations elsewhere in the state was the highest in the state. In addition to the population growth caused by in-migration, MatSu's high birth rate added a significant number of young people to the local population.

Most of the former Anchorage residents came to the valley to take advantage of lower home prices and property taxes. The cost of a single family residence in Anchorage was an average of 27% greater than a comparable unit in the MatSu valley. This was attractive to many Anchorage workers despite the higher transportation costs associated with the extended commuter trip.

The population boom in the Mat-Su Borough soon translated into employment growth. From 1980-1985 MatSu employment increased 114% or 16.5% annually, making it the fastest growing region in the state. This growth rate was nearly 3.5 times greater than the statewide average and 2.8 times greater than Anchorage's growth rate.

Most of MatSu's employment gains were in industries constructing housing or providing goods and services to the rapidly growing population. Construction employment grew 450% from 1980 to 1984, that represents over 800 jobs or approximately 24% of the total job growth during that time. Construction of residential units began to slow in 1985 and construction employment began to fall, but jobs in the goods and services industry continued to expand. From 1980 to 1985, the trade industry grew by over 134% (1,000 jobs) and services increased by 145% (670 jobs). Utilities and other service oriented industries such as banking also contributed to the number of new jobs in the MatSu Borough.

Local government employment grew in response to population. The education component of local government in particular grew in response to the rapid rise in school enrollment which accompanied the population surge. From the fall of 1980 to the fall of 1985 student enrollment in the district increased from 4,413 students to 8,782 students, an increase of 99%. Meanwhile school district employment increased by 70% to 1,230 jobs.

MatSu 1986-1987

Although most of the rest of the state had already experienced total employment declines by January 1986, the MatSu region continued to grow through the first quarter of 1986 (Figure 1). During that quarter MatSu employment increased 2.3% while Anchorage employment fell 1.3%. The growth in early 1986 was a result of increases in local government employment combined with smaller gains in services, state government, finance, insurance, telephone communications and wholesale trade. Increases in these secondary industries offset large employment losses in the construction industry and minor losses in manufacturing.

The increase in school staff from 1980 to 1985 was in response to an increase in school enrollment, but by fall 1986 enrollment was up less than 200 students, substantially less than the 750 student increase the previous year. As the impacts of a declining economy spread, more families were forced to move out of the area in search of jobs. By the next fall school enrollment had dropped by over 380 students, a 4.3 percent decline.

By the summer of 1986 the economic and population indicators showed all too clearly that an economic slowdown was underway (Figure 2). Not only was employment falling and school enrollment waning, the commuter traffic on the Glenn Highway between MatSu and Anchorage began to decline after growing almost 20% annually since 1980, the number of telephone hookups also fell beginning in 1986 after four years of double digit growth (Figure 2) and construction activity declined by nearly 140% from 1985 levels.

About the only growth statistic that could be found in the borough was the community college enrollment figures which indicated an increase in students from the 1987 spring semester to the 1987 fall semester by several hundred students. School officials also expect an increase in students for the spring quarter of 1988 (January 1988). This statistic may also be an indication of a bad economy. During good times people do not have the time to go back to school because they are working. During bad economic times people are inclined to upgrade their training and education and search for new careers.

By the end of 1986 employment had fallen 4.5%. By the first half of 1987 employment had declined 7.1% from the first half of 1986 (Table 1).

The industry hardest hit during the decline has been the construction industry. From 1986 to 1987 construction accounted for 65% of the jobs lost in the borough. In 1987 the borough reported 171 single family homes were built in the valley down from 520 in 1985 and 1,817 in 1986.

The most resilient industry has been retail trade. Employment gains were registered during the first half of 1987 after 200 jobs were lost the prior year. Surprisingly strong were food stores and eating and drinking establishments which comprise nearly 70% of total retail employment in the area. During the first half of 1987 employment in the food store sector increased over 5% as major grocers expanded.

Summary and Outlook for 1988

As we have seen, employment levels in the MatSu valley are particularly sensitive to population levels. MatSu doesn't seem to follow the standard economic theory that says employment leads population—that is, employment opportunities promote population increases. Since the Mat-Su Borough is the residence of many Anchorage and some oil field workers it can be said that MatSu's population levels are related to employment opportunities in other areas besides those in the MatSu Borough.

The good news is that employment opportunities in Anchorage are be-

Figure 1
Matsu Employment by Quarter 1980 – 1987/1

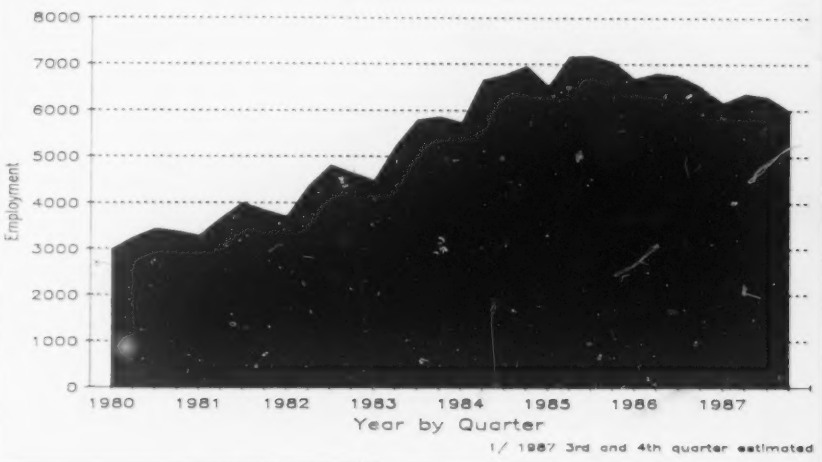

Figure 2
Matsu Economic Indicators Percent Change
1985 – 1986 and 1986 – 1987